

Ft. Lauderdale, Florida
Guidance for Breakout Discussion Groups
9 May 2001

During the period from 10:30 am until 12:00 noon the plan is to have all participants to break into some six groups with about ten participants each. The six breakout groups would be organized as indicated below. The notes in parentheses for each group are provided as issues to consider and are intended to represent discussion goals. Feel free to consider other topics as well. Please make sure that you start your session by having both a discussion leader and a group reporter to help capture the discussion and to be able to provide a five minute summary of your group's findings.

- Group 1: Future Trends in Distance Education and Tele-Education: What are the Right or Wrong Models?** (Please try to describe positive and negatives approaches to tele-education, tele-training, etc.)
- Group 2: The Digital Divide: Exploring Educational Strategies and Solutions for the U.S. and Developing Countries** (Please try to note what kinds of problems are engendered by a lack of universal service or access to IT technologies and the Internet in terms of education and training. Also discuss how this problem is different for the U.S. and for developing countries. Finally, try to identify positive strategies and obstacles to overcome these issues and problems.)
- Group 3: Coping with and Applying Communications and IT Technology to Education: Is the Result Telepower or Teleshock?** (Sometimes technology is seen as a panacea. In fact it often brings both new opportunities and educational gains as well as problems and challenges to be overcome. Identify the pluses and minuses and how to use the Internet and IT systems to strengthen instruction and class interaction.)
- Group 4: Research Trends for the 21st Century : Is Their a "Right Path" for Land Grant Colleges and Universities and the USDA?** (Research continues to expand in terms of dollars and sophistication of approach and research infrastructure, but are proportionate gains being achieved? Are there newer and better ways to carry out college and university research? How should the Cooperative Extension System fit into Land Grant college research programs or vice versa? Are interdisciplinary approaches or cross disciplinary communications a part of the issue or problem or part of the solution?)
- Group 5: Curriculum and Educational Approaches for the "e-Sphere": Coping with the Information Explosion, the 168 Hour Work Week, "De-Skilling", Information Overload, Loss of Privacy, "Churn" in Employment and Jobs, Electronic Immigration and Telecommuting, etc.** (What are the educational and training strategies to cope with life in the e-Sphere? Should there be more or less "basic or core content"? A 5 year college curriculum? More Specialization? More "hands on" or experiential learning? Improved life-long learning concepts? Re-certification of degrees? Should there be more interdisciplinary team

studies, etc. How can the Cooperative Extension System help? **Note:** Several of these “possible” solutions may be at odds with one another.)

Group 6: **New Challenges in 21st Century Education** (What are the solutions? Should we re-tool into formal life-long learning? What kinds of re-certification of professionals or other "knowledge upgrades" are needed and for what fields? Should there be other types of degrees or new forms of education/training for those who are changing jobs or career goals? What kind of research programs are needed? What role should colleges and universities play coping with changing life expectancies, the explosion of new information, globalism, etc.?)